(c) and (d) Along with the aforesaid import of 5 MMTPA LNG by the Indian companies, under a Buy Back Contract OVL has been offered 100% rights and obligations for the development of the Jufeyroilfield and 10% rights and obligation for development of the Yadavaranoilfield.

As regards IOC's plans of investing in Iran, they, along with M/s Petropars of Iran, have submitted a joint proposal to NIOC for the award of a Block to set up LNG liquefication plant and marketing the LNG. As far as participation in Petrochemicals projects in Iran is concerned, GAIL is in discussion with the National Petrochemicals Company of Iran.

Overseas gas pipeline projects

190. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has weighed possible political risks over the proposed Indo-Iranian pact on supply of natural gas pipe overland *via* Pakistan;

(b) whether India has also taken due note of US apprehensions over the proposed Indo-Iranian gas supply pact and of the possible US sanctions over Iran threatening the implementation of the project; and

(c) the status of other overland gas pipeline projects being negotiated with Turkmenistan and Myanmar?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) In order to meet the country's energy requirements, Government is pursuing the prospects for importing natural gas from Iran by underground pipelines. The Government is discussing the details of the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline project with the Governments of Iran and Pakistan. The discussion is progressing satisfactorily. For this purpose, two separate Secretary-level Joint Working Groups (JWGs) viz., the India-Iran special JWG and the India-Pakistan JWG, have been constituted to discuss the "financial, technical, commercial, legal and related issues to realize a safe and secure world-class project".

(c) Minister (P&NG) had visited Myanmar in January 2005 and participated in the trilateral Ministerial meeting between the Oil Ministers of Bangladesh, Myanmar and India. In pursuance of the decisions taken at that meeting, a Techno-Commercial Working Committee (TCWC) of the

representatives of the three countries was constituted. The first Meeting of the TCWC was held on 24-25 February 2005 in Yangon. The TCWC prepared a draft MoU, proposed to be signed by the three oil Ministers after approval of their respective Governments. However, as Bangladesh insisted on referring to certain bilateral issues in the draft trilateral MoU, the finalization of the MoU has been delayed. While we are exploring other options of importing natural gas from Myanmar outstanding issues relating to the draft MoU continue to be under consideration of both Governments.

With regard to the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan (TAP) Pipeline project, India has been invited to attend the next meeting of the Streering Committee of the TAP project in Ashgabat. India will be attending the meeting as an observer.

Exploration of oil and gas in Gujarat

191. SHRI BALAVANT ALIAS BALAPTE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plan for exploration of gas and oil in the Gujarat Region keeping in veiw the availability of oil and gas reserves there;

(b) if so, the details thereof, and

(c) the estimated expenditure likely to be incurred on the project?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) started hydrocarbons exploration in the State of Gujarat in 1956 and continue its efforts. As on 1.4.2005, ONGC have acquired a total of 104191 Ground Line Kilometers (GLK) of 2-D seismic data, 4220 square kilometers of 3-D seismic data, and drilled 2252 exploratory and 3109 development wells in the State of Gujarat. As a result of these exploratory efforts, ONGC have made 92 hydrocarbon finds and established 1313.88 Million Metric Tonne (oil+equivalent of gas) initial in-place volume of hydrocarbons (as on 1.4.2005) in the State Gujarat.

To supplement exploration efforts, the Government of the India have already awarded six exploration blocks to National Oil Companies (NOCs) and foreign and private/joint venture companies in the first four rounds of